

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8623

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, FR, BE, TECH, AODE

SUBJECT: MODE - NRC REGIONAL OFFICE AT AMEMBASSY PARIS

REF: STATE 037105

1. WE APPRECIATE AND ARE ALERT TO THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF NUCLEAR ISSUES IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH FRANCE, AND IN PARTICULAR, TO THE UNIQUE AND SIGNIFICANT ROLE NUCLEAR SAFETY ASPECTS HAVE IN THESE RELATIONS. NRC'S EXERCISE OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES ARE CAREFULLY STUDIED BY THE FRENCH; THEY ATTACH HIGH IMPORTANCE TO CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. AND THE NRC ON NUCLEAR SAFETY MATTERS. THIS EMBASSY HAS GIVEN THIS AREA HIGH PRIORITY IN RESPONDING TO THE REQUESTS OF NRC AND THE GOF.

2. IN PRINCIPLE, I DO NOT FAVOR THE INCREASE OF USG PERSONNEL OVERSEAS WITHOUT ADEQUATELY DEMONSTRATED NEED. WITH RESPECT TO US-FRENCH RELATIONS IN NUCLEAR SAFETY ISSUES, I DO NOT BELIEVE WE HAVE REACHED THE POINT WHERE THIS MISSION CANNOT REASONABLY MEET THE CURRENT NEEDS OF NRC, PARTICULARLY IF THAT AGENCY IS PREPARED TO DISPATCH FROM WASHINGTON FROM TIME TO TIME APPROPRIATELY QUALIFIED SPECIALISTS TO ASSIST IN MAINTAINING THE CLOSE TECHNICAL LIAISON BETWEEN THE GOF AND

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THE USG IN THIS FIELD.

3. I CANNOT SPEAK TO THE NEEDS OF THE OTHER MISSIONS IN THE REGION CONTEMPLATED IN THE NRC PROPOSAL; HOWEVER, SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT INSIST THAT AN NRC REGIONAL OFFICER IS TO BE PLACED IN THIS MISSION REGARDLESS OF OUR VIEWS ON THE BILATERAL ASPECTS, WE WOULD WANT TO EXAMINE IN MUCH CLOSER DETAIL WITH THE DEPARTMENT AND NRC THE ARRANGEMENTS MENTIONED IN PARA 9 OF REFTEL TO MINIMIZE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE MISUNDERSTANDINGS. WE ANTICIPATE NO IMPACT ON OUR ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT CAPABILITIES BASED ON CONTENTS OF REFTEL PARAS 6 & 7.

4. THE POSSIBLE INTEREST OF ERDA IN STATIONING ONE OF ITS OFFICERS IN THIS MISSION (PARA 10 REFTEL) IS PRESUMED TO BE CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THE POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN BILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY COVERED BY THE PROPOSED ERDA-CEA AGREEMENT NOW UNDER NEGOTIATION. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES IN THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NRC AND ERDA, IT IS PRUDENT TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY THE POSSIBILITY OF MEETING THE INCREASE IN NEEDS OF BOTH AGENCIES BY AUGMENTING THE NUCLEAR EXPERTISE OF THE EMBASSY'S SCIENCE OFFICE THROUGH UTILIZING EXISTING MISSION POSITIONS, OR DEPARTMENT OR NRC/ERDA OVERSEAS POSITIONS. THIS MATTER SHOULD AWAIT ERDA'S CONSIDERED OPINION OF ITS NEEDS FOR STAFF SUPPORT IN FRANCE.

5. A PROPOSAL TO PLACE AN NRC REP AND AN ERDA REP AT THE SAME POST DOES NOT MAKE THE BEST USE OF SUCH SPECIALIZED OFFICERS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE POSTS CONCERNED IN THE NRC REGION. IT WOULD MAKE BETTER SENSE TO PLACE THE NRC REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE AT A POST NOT HOUSING AN ERDA REPRESENTATIVE SO THAT AN ADDITIONAL POST COULD BENEFIT FROM HAVING ON ITS STAFF A NUCLEAR ENERGY SPECIALIST.

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